**Note of Meeting of Perthshire Tourism Partnership**

**9 September 2021**

**Attendees**

Alan Graham, Perth & Kinross Council

Caroline Warburton, VisitScotland

Chris Greenwood, VisitScotland

David Smythe, Chair, Perthshire Tourism Partnership

George Lawrie, TRACKS/Loch Leven Partnership

Jackie Brierton, GROWBIZ

Jonathan Wilson, Chair, Visit Aberfeldy

Joyce Kitching, Historic Environment Scotland

Murray Scott, Chair, BEPTA

Pete Crane, Cairngorm National Park Authority

Rhona Metcalfe, Chair, The Atholl Glens

Suzanne Cumiskey, Perth & Kinross Council

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| 1 | **Welcome & Introductions**  David Smythe, Chairperson, Perthshire Tourism Partnership  DS welcomed everyone to the meeting. DS commented that there were still issues with sector recruitment; high case rates of COVID hampering international travel (even with vaccine programme); vaccine passports debate across nations; issues with supply chain & delivery which are ongoing; book ahead policy means no spontaneity, people always having to book ahead no incidental spend. Positives- good to see new Ranger Service in Perthshire making a difference to issues experienced in 2020 due to wild camping.  Perthshire Tourism Action Plan complete and due to launch September 2021, with Perthshire Talks Tourism webinars starting end of September 2021. |  |
| 2 | **Note of previous meeting**  All in agreement was an accurate note of meeting |  |
| 3 | **Insights on the Scottish Tourism Landscape**  Chris Greenwood, Senior Tourism Insights Manager, Visit Scotland  CG advised the VS Insights Team’s focus during the COVID-19 pandemic had been to support the work of [STERG](https://www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/advice/coronavirus/sterg/national-action-plan), to advise on where best to target business sector support through provision of evidence base , support tourism recovery planning efforts in line with the national Scotland Outlook 2020 strategy and to track consumer sentiment and propensity to travel.  Domestic tourism is driving recovery in most countries globally.  Figures are pointing to a bounce back for international inbound travel 2022/23. This will be assisted by the vaccine rollout programmes. At present figures show tourist arrivals in 2021 to the UK were 85% lower than 2019, when comparing the period Jan-May.  National Visitor Surveys such as IPS/ONS are in a state of flux and figures to date are not considered to be robust to publish. As such the UK Travel Boards are collectively looking at consumer sentiment trackers and have done throughout the pandemic.  <https://www.visitscotland.org/research-insights/coronavirus-insights/uk-market#residentsviews>  The Highlands remains the favoured destination for Scottish residents planning a holiday. This has been consistent throughout pandemic. Rural destinations experiencing higher demand.  **Consumer Trends**   * Trust, Safety & Hygiene are key considerations, businesses can demonstrate this via the [We’re Good-to-Go](https://goodtogo.visitbritain.com/home) mark * Short booking window still * Outdoor/Wellness boom is real and is driving the NetZero/ Sustainability agenda * Time is now viewed as an asset with the travel element now part of the holiday e.g. Slow Tourism * Personalisation has never been more important at all stages of the customer journey. People have high expectations from their holiday& are looking to reclaim time lost to them.   **Recovery Actions**  **New Global Marketing Campaign:** **Scotland is Calling**. This is one of the Scottish Government Tourism Recovery Projects (International Brand Building). VisitScotland are hosting an industry webinar on their upcoming international marketing campaign, Scotland is Calling which aims to position Scotland as a 1st choice destination and encourage bookings in 2022.  Takes place Wednesday 15 September from 11am – 12pm. This will be recorded. More info: <https://www.visitscotland.org/news/2021/marketing-webinar>  **Scottish Tourism Observatory;** This is one of the Scottish Government Tourism Recovery Projects which will gather and analyse data to drive policy, strategy and decision making.  This is a partnership project between SE, HIE and Scottish Government.  <https://www.visitscotland.org/research-insights/about-our-industry/scottish-tourism-observatory>  **Now is Your Time Campaign;** Domestic Campaign includes the creation of a series of new videos for different groups of visitors. There is still some hesitancy about booking , combined with desire for a holiday. Campaign will focus on why now the time for visitors is to take a break in Scotland.  [Only in Scotland - Marketing Toolkit | VisitScotland.org](https://www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/marketing/toolkits/only-in-scotland) | See attached presentation |
| 4 | **Scotland’s Year of Stories 2022**  Caroline Warburton, Regional Leadership Director (East), VisitScotland  CW gave an overview of Scotland’s Year of Stories 2022, which is the next themed year and outlined the opportunities for industry to get involved.  There are 5 themes to the year   * Iconic Stories and Storytellers * New Stories * Scotland’s People and Places * Local Tales & Legends * Inspired by Nature   Businesses can get involved by   * Joining #YS2022 webinar on 9September 2021 [Year of Stories 2022 Industry Webinar - News | VisitScotland.org](https://www.visitscotland.org/news/2021/scotlands-year-of-stories-2022-industry-webinar) * Downloading the Toolkit [Year of Stories 2022 - Marketing Toolkit | VisitScotland.org](https://www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/marketing/toolkits/themed-years-toolkits) * Adding an event to the Partner Programme [Themed Years Partner Events Programme (visitscotland.org)](https://www.visitscotland.org/events/promotion/themed-year-partner-programme/form)  There is also a Year of Stories 2022 Community Stories Fund with awards of between £500 - £5000. This fund is being administered by Museums Galleries Scotland [Museums Galleries Scotland | Year of Stories 2022 - Community Stories Fund](https://www.museumsgalleriesscotland.org.uk/funding/year-of-stories-2022-community-stories-fund/) Deadline 1 October 2021.  * Be social use hashtags #YS2022 and #TalesofScotland | See attached presentation |
| 5 | **Support for Rural Enterprises**  Jackie Brierton, CEO, GrowBiz Scotland  DS welcomed Jackie Brierton Chairperson of LEADER and Rural Advisor to the Perthshire Leadership Group to the meeting to provide an overview of what support is available for rural businesses in Perthshire.   * GrowBiz is an enterprise support service/local enterprise facilitation for rural businesses which was set up 15 years ago * GrowBiz cover Perthshire, Cairngorms and South of Scotland * Offer 121 Support; Learning Sessions; Peer Support Meetings; Networking Events; Mentoring Programme and REDS [www.growbiz.co.uk/learning](http://www.growbiz.co.uk/learning) and support for young entrepreneurs * Varied team of advisers that abide by GrowBiz Principles * Diverse types of business use the service with 40-50% existing businesses. * 2020/21 saw record numbers of start up businesses. Pandemic has encouraged start-ups. Individuals re-assessing their lifestyles which is in turn driving enterprise. People are also moving to rural areas, away from cities. * 30-40 new clients per month using service * REDS is a RURAL ENTERPRISE DIRECTORY which is free to join if a business is actively trading, based in rural & island Scotland, has 10 or fewer employees and a turnover less than £500,000 per annum. * If on the directory can join the REDS Gift Card which is a rural gift card to drive commerce in rural economies and is run by MI Conex. * Key challenge still is the digital skills gap. GrowBiz have had an 18 month focus on this, however still 10% of businesses in area with no online presence. Pandemic has made it even more vital to be online. Recent Digital Development Fund opened and closed within a day. | See attached presentation |
| 6 | **LTA Discussion (All)**  **Loch Leven Tourism Association**   * Sector recruitment issues and ongoing challenge for local businesses * RSPB Loch Leven expansion project funded by RTIF IS progressing well, looking to open October 2021 * There is no operator/ restaurant at The Boathouse * HES to re-open Loch Leven Castle 2022   **Visit Aberfeldy**   * Positive forward bookings across the area until the end of October 2021 * Dewar’s Aberfeldy Distillery will shift focus to building business on online shop for winter months * JW site visit to DIAGEO Johnnie Walker in Edinburgh, doesn’t duplicate what rural distilleries offer * Community pushback IN Aberfeldy to events such as Tri Athlon and Etape Caledonia * Campsite at Kenmore withdrawn from planning due to objections. Planning approved for expansion of Grandtully Campsite car park and toilets   **Historic Environment Scotland**   * See attached   **Cairngorm National Park Authority**   * Sector recruitment an issue across the Cairngorms * Ranger Service working well again in 2021/ 500 black bags cleared this season * RTIF application submitted for Beinn a Ghlo Car Park with Outdoor Access Trust for Scotland * Looking at developing Overnight Parking Areas for Motorhomes. SC to share PKC new guidance.   **The Atholl Glens**   * Some businesses only able to open 5 days due to ongoing Sector Recruitment issues * Staff accommodation again problematic in rural areas * Forward bookings positive until end of October 2021 * Some repeat business into the area until March 2022 * Looking to engage with Atholl Estates. Discussed timing of events such as Blair Atholl Horse Trials events which would benefit area if timing could be changed as August peak season * Bridge of Tilt Hotel will open summer 2022 with 22 bedrooms |  |
| 7 | **A.O.B** |  |
| 8 | **Date of next meeting**  19 November 2021 |  |